# SYSTEM AND METHOD OF FORWARDING K-BYTES BETWEEN OPTICAL CARDS IN A COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

## ABSTRACT

Described are a system and method for forwarding K-bytes between optical cards in a communication system. The system includes a first card and second card each connected to a backplane. The second card obtains protection-signaling information from an incoming signal arriving at the second card from over a network. The second card generates an out-of-band signal having the protection-signaling information, and transmits the out-of-band signal having the protection-signaling information to the first card in the network element. In one embodiment, the first card is a cross-connect card, and the cross-connect card simultaneously transmits the out-of-band signal with the protection-signaling information to a plurality of cards in the system.